

ICOW Regime Claims Codebook

This data set covers all regime claims involving target governments in the Western Hemisphere between 1816-1992. This data set was collected by John Tures while writing his doctoral dissertation at Florida State University.

This section of the codebook provides details from his dissertation concerning the nature of regime claims. The official citation is:

Tures, John (2000) *The Onset and Escalation of Regime Claims in the Western Hemisphere, 1816-1992*. Ph.D. Dissertation, Florida State University.¹

Additional information can be found in the dissertation itself.

Operationalizing Regime Claims

A regime-based claim involves explicit contention between two or more states over a regime's control of the governing apparatus of one of the states. Essentially, one government issues a verbal challenge to the other state's regime, calling for its removal. To identify these situations, I rely upon several criteria that these cases must satisfy before being coded as a regime claim.

Explicit Verbal Challenge

Official representatives of the state's government must support the regime claim. Examples of official representatives include heads of state or government ministers charged with the authority to act on behalf of the state. Claims made by nonstate actors such as individuals, media or political parties (not in control of the state) are excluded unless they have been given authority by the state to act on its behalf. The claim may be directed either to another state's government, to the subjects of that government (such as those encouraging the overthrow of the state), or to an international organization calling for action against the targeted government.² But the challenging state must make the explicit demand; accusations of international interference in another state's domestic ruling affairs are not included unless accompanied by an unambiguous statement calling for the removal of another regime.³

Multilateral Cases & Role of International Organizations

A regime claim is not always a bilateral affair; numerous cases exist where a multitude of states can coordinate their actions calling for the removal of a regime, in much the same way that the United States, Barbados, Jamaica and the members of the Organization of East Caribbean States (OECS) called for Grenada's coup regime (which removed and executed Maurice Bishop) to step down from power (and later took military action to enforce this claim). But the key distinction is that a state must formally make the charges against the coup government for the event to be coded as a regime claim.

¹ Will H. Moore served as the Dissertation Chair.

² Subsequently, I address the issue of claims made through international organizations, and provide several examples.

³ For example, if Cuba insists that the United States Central Intelligence Agency is attempting to overthrow it, the case is not included unless accompanied by a statement from a recognized governmental authority in the United States (such as the U.S. president) calling for Fidel Castro to step aside.

Cases exist in international organizations where the institution will vote to issue a political sanction tantamount to a regime claim against a member's government. For example, in the early 1960s, the Organization of American States (OAS) issued such political sanctions against the Trujillo regime in the Dominican Republic and against Castro's government in Cuba. But unless every member's government officially makes the statement calling for the removal of Trujillo or Castro, a regime claim does not exist. Regime claim challenges are not made by virtue of organizational membership in an institution making the statement calling for another's removal. Therefore, affixing one's name to a resolution condemning another's government is not enough to constitute a regime claim; the government must make such a statement itself. Those OAS members who individually issue the verbal statement calling on either Trujillo or Castro to leave office are included in the multilateral claim. For example, Mexico, an OAS member, did not vote for the resolution against Cuba, and maintained ties with Castro's regime. The absence of a statement calling for the removal of Castro, as well as their general lack of enthusiasm for such a policy in the OAS leads me to conclude that a Mexico-Cuba regime claim does not exist, regardless of the official OAS resolution condemning Cuba.

Sources & Statements

To develop a list of one country's verbal challenges to another regime's governability, I conducted an extensive review of news resources such as the *New York Times Index*, *Keesing's Contemporary Archives*, and *Facts on File* as well as an in-depth review of relevant literature on the interstate interactions of Western Hemisphere countries.

Judging what distinguishes a regime claim from just any state diatribe against another government is a daunting task. Some indication in the statement must be made that the existing regime must step aside. But what about cases where perhaps one state calls for a coup leader to "swim in his own blood?" Or when a target claims that a democracy is corrupt and morally bankrupt, cruel and inhumane to its own people? In many cases, I had to make a judgment call on whether or not a statement should be included as a regime claim, but I stuck to the principles including the explicit, unambiguous statement and some indication that the targeted regime should leave power.

Claim Duration

What standard should be used to determine the length of a regime claim after the initial charge has been leveled against another's government? In order to establish a regime claim's longevity, I make the requirement that if no subsequent statements are made for two years after the initial allegation, the claim has become dormant and will not be coded in the dataset until a declaration is made reviving the claim.⁴ If a statement is made countermending the claim less than two years after the initial assertion, the claim is considered settled on the day the challenger officially drops the demand for the other regime to leave power.

Two years may seem like a short duration for a claim to become dormant (in absence of a claim supporting statement). But given the gravity of a charge calling for another regime to step aside, two years is a long period to wait before issuing at least some supporting statement. If a leader or foreign policy team goes two years without backing their original claim, their interest in the subject can be questioned.

⁴ For example, if U.S. President Clinton makes a statement in 1993 that Castro must leave power in Cuba, and no subsequent statements are issued by Clinton or by any individual authorized to speak on behalf of the United States government to back the claim after a two year period, the claim is concluded. If some incident in 1996 causes Clinton to reiterate the claim against Castro, the claim is considered to exist from 1993 to 1995, and again from 1996 to the present.

The goal of this data set is to provide a systematic data set concerning regime claims, which would be consistent with the territorial, river, and maritime claims data sets collected by the Issue Correlates of War (ICOW) research project at Florida State University. More detail on that project, including those additional data sets, is available online at <<http://www.icow.org>>. For now, this data set only offers a list of claim participants and dates, with several largely descriptive variables. Eventually, though, a variety of additional variables will be made available, allowing the measurement of issue salience for each of these regime claims. Claim summaries and complete lists of sources will also be made available in the future.

List of Variables

A. Claim: An arbitrary code number for each regime claim (with a new claim indicating a different leader who removal is being sought).

B. Dyadnum: An arbitrary code number for each challenger-target relationship within each individual regime claim.

C. Name: The name of the targeted leader(s), where this could be determined.⁵

D. Chal / E.Chalname: The Correlates of War (COW) country code and name of the challenger state in each dyad, or the state that has initiated the regime claim. This state must be a member of the COW interstate system.

F. Target / G. Targname: The COW country code and name of the target state, or the state whose leader is being targeted by the challenger. This state must also be a member of the COW interstate system.⁶

H. Indirect: A dummy variable indicating whether the claim is indirect in nature. For a case to be coded as indirect, the target of the regime claim must be a dependency of another state, in which case the colonial power is coded as the target state. An example is the U.S. and British regime claim against Spain regarding Mexican independence. Mexico is not yet a member of the COW interstate system because of its status as a Spanish dependency, so Spain is coded as the target state and the claim is coded as indirect.

I. Begyear / J. Endyear: The years in which the regime claim began and ended. If no new statements have been made after a two year period, the claim is considered concluded. Claims are considered ongoing if they have not ended by December 31, 1992.

K. Militarized Conflict: A dummy variable indicating whether the challenger and target states engaged in at least one COW militarized interstate dispute, ICB international crisis, or foreign overt military intervention (FOMI) during the period of the regime claim. Note that the dispute, crisis, or intervention could be over any issue; it need not necessarily be over the regime claim itself. Also, this variable does not indicate how many disputes, crises, or interventions occurred; the actual number ranges from one to sixteen.

⁵ In some cases, there may be multiple leaders of a junta which have taken power. One may be considered a figurehead, another is a spokesperson, or a division of labor may be devised allowing one leader to handle internal affairs while another controls external relations.

⁶ In some cases, a challenger may be attempting to support a breakaway republic which has declared its independence, but has not been recognized by the target country. I identify those coup leaders in charge of the parent state as being challenged by the regime claim.

L. Reach: This variable indicates whether the challenger state could reasonably be considered to be able to reach the target state militarily. The target is considered reachable if the challenger state is a major power according to the Correlates of War project, or if the challenger's level of military technology is sufficient to cover the geographic distance between it and the target (drawing from Douglas Lemke's 1995 *International Interactions* article "The Tyranny of Distance", extended by John Tures to include Central America and the Caribbean as well as South America). Only cases that were considered reachable were included in Tures' dissertation.

Contact Information

John Tures is responsible for the collection and maintenance of this data set. Any questions, problems, or other inquiries should be directed to him at <johntures@yahoo.com>. Additional information on the data set and additional released data will be made available on the ICOW project web page, at <<http://www.icow.org>>.